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SUBJECT: SEOUL - PRESS BULLETIN; August 26, 2009

TOP HEADLINES

Chosun Ilbo, Dong-a Ilbo, Hankook Ilbo, Hankyoreh Shinmun, Segye
Ilbo, Seoul Shinmun, All TVs
ROK's First Space Rocket Lifts Off Successfully,
but Fails to Place Satellite into Intended Orbit

JoongAng Ilbo
Cabinet Reshuffle Set for Next Week;
Prime Minister Han Expected to be Replaced

DOMESTIC DEVELOPMENTS

Red Cross officials from the two Koreas will meet today for
three-day talks to discuss resuming reunions of separated families
for the Oct. 3 Chuseok (Korean Thanksgiving) holiday. (All)

The reported invitation by North Korea to Stephen Bosworth, the U.S.
Special Representative for North Korea Policy, to visit Pyongyang is
attracting attention because Ambassador Bosworth's visit can be
interpreted as a "prelude" to bilateral talks between the two
countries. (Chosun) However, given Washington's consistent position
that bilateral talks with North Korea are possible only within the
Six-Party Talks framework, the U.S. is likely to decide on the
Ambassador's visit only after verifying the North's seriousness
about denuclearization. (Chosun, Dong-a, Hankook, Hankyoreh, Seoul,
all TVs)

MEDIA ANALYSIS

-N. Korea

Today's resumption of inter-Korean Red Cross talks to discuss
arranging separated family reunions for the Oct. 3 Chuseok (Korean
Thanksgiving) holiday received wide press coverage. According to
media reports, the meeting, which will take place at the North's Mt.
Kumgang resort until August 28, will be the first of its kind since
the launch of the Lee Myung-bak Administration and is part of the
recent series of "conciliatory gestures" by North Korea toward the

ROK.

Conservative Chosun Ilbo carried a front-page analysis entitled "Two Koreas to Resume Red Cross Talks Today; N. Korea Makes Conciliatory Gestures with Nuclear Weapons in Hands." The analysis argued: "At first glance, inter-Korean relations seem to be getting back on track. However, this is nothing more than an illusion, because the North is refusing to budge an inch on its nuclear problem, the key pending issue between the two Koreas."

Most newspapers and TV networks reported that North Korea had invited Stephen Bosworth, the U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Policy, to visit Pyongyang.

Conservative Chosun Ilbo observed that Ambassador Bosworth's visit to Pyongyang, if realized, can be interpreted as a "prelude" to direct talks between the two countries on pending issues, including the North Korean nuclear issue. Right-of-center JoongAng Ilbo cited USG officials and U.S. experts as attributing North Korea's apparent return to negotiations to UNSC Resolution 1874, which has cut off the flow of funds to North Korea.

Most newspapers, including Chosun, and TV networks, however, noted Washington's consistent position that bilateral talks with North Korea are possible only within the Six-Party Talks framework, and speculated that the U.S. is likely to decide on the Ambassador's visit only after verifying the North's seriousness about denuclearization.

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In a related development, State Department Spokesman Ian Kelly was widely quoted: "The atmospherics of the last month or so are certainly more productive than when the North Koreans were shooting off missiles and detaining journalists. But I don't see any real specific movement in (North Korea) towards resuming the Six-Party Talks.."

FEATURES

1N. KOREA 'INVITES U.S. SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE'
(Chosun Ilbo, August 26, 2009, page 6)

By Reporter Lim Min-hyuk
Will North Korea find a breakthrough in bilateral talks with the U.S. by extending an invitation to (U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Policy Stephen) Bosworth (to visit Pyongyang?)

Recently North Korea has launched a "charm offensive" to realize bilateral talks with the U.S. and conveyed a message to the U.S. that it hopes for Bosworth's visit to Pyongyang.

Diplomatic sources in Seoul and Washington on Monday said the North asked on two or three occasions recently whether Ambassador Bosworth and Special Envoy for the Six-Party Talks Sung Kim could visit Pyongyang, a clear shift from early this year, when it declined a visit from Bosworth.

Ambassador Bosworth's visit to Pyongyang, if realized, can be interpreted as a "prelude" to direct talks between the two countries on pending issues, including the North Korean nuclear issue. Former President Bill Clinton's visit to Pyongyang early this month was a "one-point" approach to secure the release of female reporters. Meanwhile, Ambassador Bosworth's visit would provide an opportunity for the U.S. and North Korea to discuss all pending issues including the nuclear issue.

The prevailing opinion is that Bosworth's visit to the North will not be made soon. The U.S. government is saying North Korea must return to the Six-Party Talks and any dialogue would be possible only within that framework. A decision about a visit from Bosworth would be made only if North Korea demonstrates its willingness to scrap its nuclear program. "Bosworth's visit will happen someday," one diplomatic source in Seoul said. "But it's not likely to happen

in September." Washington is still maintaining a hard stance. The U.S. will not hastily pursue talks with the North. State Department Spokesman Ian Kelly said in a briefing, "I don't see any real specific movement in (North Korea) towards resuming the Six-Party Talks."
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However, other speculation has it that the U.S. government could be more ready to accept Pyongyang's request if there are hopes of an early resumption of the stalled Six-Party Talks. In one scenario, Bosworth will visit North Korea after making prior consultations with the ROK, China, Russia and Japan to obtain their consent. If the U.S. engages in full consultations with related parties to restart the Six-Party Talks, it will give Bosworth a justification to visit Pyongyang without impairing the major premise that the bilateral talks should be held within the Six-Party Talks.

(We have compared the English version on the website with the Korean version and added some paragraphs to make them identical.)

TOKOLA